

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are pending. Claim 1 is amended. A marked-up version showing the changes made by the present amendment is attached hereto as "**Version with markings to show changes made.**"

Claim 1 was objected to due to an informality with respect to use of proper Markush language. In addition, claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. It is respectfully submitted that the amended claims overcome the objection and the rejection. Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Nichiuchi et al. (JP '216). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In the rejection, the Examiner comments that JP '216 teaches "that the chemical conversion film includes a rare earth metal and iron from the magnet surface." The Examiner highlights paragraph [0030] of JP '216. However, JP '216 does not teach the chemical conversion film as claimed, and the paragraph highlighted by the Examiner does not appear to teach what the Examiner asserts.

More specifically, JP '216 requires that its chemical film is provided on the magnet through an aluminum coat. As such, it would not be possible for such a film to contain (b) a rare earth metal from the rare earth metal-based permanent magnet.

At the paragraph pointed out by the Examiner, it is merely described that even if there is a portion on which a sufficient aluminum coat is not provided on the magnet surface, the corrosion resistance of the portion will be supplemented because of a passive film formed thereon by a reaction between phosphoric acid, composite phosphoric acid or the like in a treatment solution and Nd or Fe as a magnet material. It is not described that the chemical film provided on the surface of the aluminum film contains Nd or Fe.

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '216. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner makes this rejection only with respect to when the metal is molybdenum or tungsten. However, as noted above, since JP '216 requires the aluminum coat, JP '216 would not provide any suggestion of the claimed chemical conversion film which includes a rare earth metal from the rare earth metal-based permanent magnet. In other words, it would not be possible for the chemical conversion film of JP '216 to contain a rare earth metal from the rare earth metal-based permanent magnet due to the presence of the aluminum coat.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the claimed invention distinguishes over the cited art and defines patentable subject matter. Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

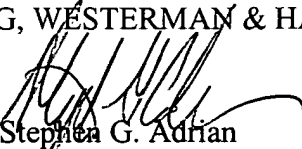
Should the Examiner deem that any further action by applicants would be desirable to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' undersigned attorney.

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/924,476

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Enclosures: Version with markings to show changes made

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IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) A permanent magnet comprising a rare earth metal-based permanent magnet having provided on the surface thereof a chemical conversion film containing, at least as the constituent components thereof, (a) at least one metal [of the metals] selected from the group consisting of molybdenum, zirconium, vanadium, and tungsten; (b) a rare earth metal from the rare earth metal-based permanent [constituting the] magnet; and (c) oxygen.